



4th December 2020

Dear parents and carers,



It's hard to believe we are in December already! The term seems to be racing by and as we enter the season of advent, we are reminded that Christmas is only a few short weeks away. This calendar year has been, for many, one of the toughest we have faced and all of us continue to have our lives impacted as a consequence of the pandemic. At this time, I am prompted to recall that Advent is a season of expectation, as we prepare our hearts and minds to receive the gift of Jesus, we can look forward with eternal hope to see beyond our immediate circumstance. In one month's time, we will be in a new year, with all the hope and promise that brings, and I am expectant for a great year in 2021 for all in our community here at St Gabriel's.

I am so proud of the hard work and dedication of our staff, governors, children and families pulling together to make this a successful term, enabling us to provide our pupils with as normal an educational experience as possible. Thank you for ensuring fantastic attendance this term, the consistency has really helped our children.

Christmas Celebrations and Dates

Whilst some of our usual traditions will look slightly different this year, we will still mark the celebration of Christmas in a number of ways:

- Church services – St. Gabriel's Church is holding a Christingle Service on **Sunday 6th December at 4.00pm** and Christmas Carols with Saxman on Sunday **20th December at 4.00pm**. Both services are being held at the school and **pre-booking is essential**. Please contact steve@stgabrielschurchhoulton.org.uk to book and for more information.

Christmas with St Gabriel's, Houlton

Christmas Carols with Saxman
Followed by festive refreshments

Sunday 20th December @4pm
St Gabriel's school

Christingle Service

Sunday 6th December
4pm @ St Gabriel's

Pre-booking is essential

Comfort and Joy   steve@stgabrielschurchhoulton.org.uk
 www.stgabrielschurchhoulton.org.uk
 [@stgabrielshoulton](https://www.facebook.com/stgabrielshoulton)



- Cards – This year we kindly request that children do not bring Christmas cards in to hand out to their classmates. As an alternative, children could **create an e-card** and email it to the office to be shared with the whole class.
- Raffle – in the absence of our Fayre, we are 'virtually' raffling Christmas hampers this year, you will have received an email with more detail on this today. Tickets must be purchased online via ParentPay and your numbers will be emailed out to you. Please could we have any donations in by **Wednesday 9th December**. Thank you!
- Christmas Jumper day – **11th December**. Children can wear their Christmas jumper in exchange for a £1 donation to Save the Children (payable via ParentPay) children will participate in a short 'Santa Dash' in their jumpers on the day.
- Christingle – Our children will take part in the Coventry Diocese virtual Christingle Service on Friday 11th December in the afternoon.
- Parties – in the final week of term, bubbles will be having individual celebrations as follows:
 - Gutenberg – Wednesday 16th PM
 - Jackson – Wednesday 16th PM
 - Hopper – Wednesday 16th PM
 - Berners-Lee – Tuesday 15th AM
 - Braille – Friday 18th AM
 - Bell – Thursday 17th PM
 - King – Friday 18th AM

Party clothes should be brought in a named bag to change into, please **come to school in uniform**. Refreshments will be provided so no need to bring food or drink in.

- Santa visit – **15th December**. All classes will have the opportunity to see Santa on his sleigh who will be joined by [Rugby Rokeby Lions](#) (£1 donation please to Rugby Lions via ParentPay).
- Christmas lunch – **16th December**. Children can wear their Christmas jumpers on this day if they wish. If you have not pre-ordered your child's Christmas lunch, they will need to bring a packed lunch from home.
- Nativity – Classes are working independently to produce a short retelling of the Christmas story accompanied by song. Parents and carers will be sent a recording of the end result in the final week of term. Please could we ask that parents do not share the video with anyone else or post any of the recording onto social media sites.
- End of Term – **Friday 18th December**. We will be finishing school slightly earlier at **2.00pm**. Angels will be running from 2.00pm and you can contact houlton@theoldstationnursery.co.uk for bookings and prices.

Parent Consultations

Appointment times for parent consultations have now gone out and next week you will receive a telephone call at the specified time. The number may show as withheld but please pick up anyway. The purpose of the conversation is to update you on your child's progress this term and to discuss their Autumn term report which you will receive prior to the appointment. As far as possible, please stick to the ten-minute slot in consideration of those following.

Spring Term

As a staff team, we are passionate about our continuous professional development, so that we too learn each day to be the best educators we possibly can. As part of this focus, I wanted to let you know that January 2021 will see some variation in staff placements. We are very excited to welcome back Mrs Dowler after a period of Maternity leave. Mrs Dowler is an experienced specialist leader of Early Years education and we are delighted she will be based in our Reception class each Monday-Wednesday, working alongside Miss Magowan and the team. This in turn

will allow Miss Magowan to gain experience in Year 1 on a short placement later in the term, working alongside Miss Randle to build a view on the journey our pupils make from Reception to Year 1.

Mrs Bemrose will be taking the lead in Year 3 as she supports children building on their start in the lower school. Meanwhile, Year 6 will benefit from the expertise of Mrs Roberts and Mrs Garner as our English and Maths leaders, to ensure they secure all the skills required to transition to secondary school effectively. The locus of class teachers is summarised in this table.

January 2021

Class	King	Bell	Braille	Berners-Lee	Hopper	Jackson	Gutenberg
Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6
Teachers	Mrs Dowler Miss Magowan	Miss Randle	Miss Bailey	Mrs Bemrose	Miss Pearce	Miss Coulson	Mrs Roberts Mrs Garner

Our aim is that this will further strengthen the team's professional skills which in turn will continue to benefit our children's progress. If you have any questions about this approach, please call the office to discuss further with me.

I am really looking forward to the next two weeks, ensuring that we end the term well, that we take the opportunity to reflect on the progress made and prepare our hearts to celebrate Christmas with our community. Your fantastic support, as always, is greatly appreciated. Finally, take a moment to watch this year's heart-warming [Christmas video](#), focusing on the themes of comfort and joy.

The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. Luke 1:19

Yours sincerely,



Mr. A. Taylor
Headteacher



St Gabriel's CofE Academy, Houlton Way, Houlton, Rugby, CV23 1AN

✉ office@stgabrielscofeacademy.org ☎ 01788 222405